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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7781

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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E.O. 11652; N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: UVF STATEMENT: REACTIONS AND COMMENTS

REF: BELFAST 22

FOLLOWING TRANSMITTED BY CONSULATE GENERAL BELFAST

BEGIN SUMMARY: REPUBLICANS/CATHOLICS WELCOMED UVF'S STATEMENT. UDA DISSOCIATED ITSELF FROM STATEMENT AND ALLIANCE WAS COOL AND SKEPTICAL. ALTHOUGH ONE MUST BE CAUTIOUS IN ANALYSING PURPORTED PROTESTANT PARAMILITARY STATEMENTS, UVF'S DOES REFLECT WIDESPREAD PROTESTANT WORKING-CLASS DISILLUSIONMENT WITH UNIONIST HIERARCHY, BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND UNION WITH UK; HEIGHTENED WORKING CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS; AND INCREASED WILLINGNESS TO TREAT NORTHERN CATHOLICS AS EQUALS IF THEY ABANDON REPUBLICANISM. BUT ATTITUDE OF UDA AND UVF INDICATE MANY PROTESTANTS ARE STILL THINKING ALONG TRADITIONAL SECTARIAN LINES. UVF'S APPARENT DETENTE

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WITH REPUBLICANS, BASED MAINLY ON OPPOSITION TO

SUNNINGDALE, COULD LEAD TO INCREASED VIOLENCE IN SHORT RUN WHILE PROMISING NO LONG-TERM SOLUTION, GIVEN FUNDAMENTAL CLASH OF NATIONALISMS. UVF "COUNCIL OF ULSTER" PROPOSALS NOT MUCH DIFFERENT FROM LOYALIST DEMANDS THAT ASSEMBLY ACT AS CONFERENCE TABLE, EXCEPT THAT UVF AND OTHER PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT IN ASSEMBLY. END SUMMARY

1. REACTIONS:

A. PRESS REPORTS FROM DUBLIN THAT PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN VICE PRESIDENT O'CONNELL WELCOMED UVF STATEMENT'S CONCILIATORY TONE TOWARD CATHOLICS AND ITS REJECTION OF SUNNINGDALE AND OTHER PRO-BRITISH POLICIES. PROVISIONALS REPORTEDLY WOULD GIVE "SERIOUS CONSIDERATION" TO UVF'S "COUNCIL OF ULSTER" PROPOSALS. VICE PRESIDENT MRS. MAIRE DRUMM SAID IN BELFAST THAT ARTICLE REPRESENTED BREAKTHROUGH IN EFFORT TO GET NI COMMUNITIES TO UNITE AND WORK TOGETHER IN INTERESTS OF THEIR OWN COUNTRY. NORTHERN LOYALISTS WERE BEGINNING TO REALIZE BRITISH WERE NOT THEIR FRIENDS, AND FUTURE OF ULSTER LIES IN BREAK WITH BRITISH IMPERIALISM. PROVOS HAD REPEATEDLY ADVOCATED NINE-COUNTY ULSTER IN WHICH PROTESTANTS WOULD STILL BE MAJORITY AND WOULD HAVE RIGHTS SAFEGUARDED BY CENTRAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. (PROVISIONAL REPUBLICAN-ORIENTED) COMHAIRLE ULADH SPOKESMAN AIDAN CORRIGAN WELCOMED UVF STATEMENT. HE NOTED THAT, WITHOUT REPUBLICANS, LOYALISTS COULD NEVER EXTRICATE SELVES FROM SHACKLES OF FAULKNER AND SUNNINGDALE POLITICIANS; LOYALISTS AND REPUBLICANS SHOULD TALK, USING DESMOND BOAL'S AMALGAMATED IRELAND PLAN AND SINN FEIN FEDERAL IRELAND PROPOSALS AS DISCUSSION DOCUMENTS.

B. OFFICIAL SINN FEIN IS REPORTED FROM DUBLIN AS WELCOMING "OBVIOUS CLASS ORIENTATION" OF UVF STATEMENT AND IN PARTICULAR ITS ANALYSIS OF COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF COUNCIL OF IRELAND. OFFICIALS WOULD WELCOME DISCUSSIONS AMONG IRISH WORKING CLASS ORGANIZATIONS TOWARD POLITICAL SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO ALL. (OFFICIAL REPUBLICAN AND COMMUNIST-ORIENTED) NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION WELCOMED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONCILIATORY STATEMENTS FROM VARIOUS PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS AND HOPED THESE WOULD JOIN WITH NICRA IN SEEKING END TO EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT.

C. (CATHOLIC) IRISH NEWS WELCOMED CONCILIATORY TONE OF UVF STATEMENT AND ITS RECOGNITION THAT BRITISH WISH TO DISENGAGE FROM IRELAND, BUT WARNED THAT CATHOLICS SHOULD NOT ABANDON REPUBLICAN ASPIRATIONS TO UVF'S PREOCCUPATION WITH ULSTER.

D. ULSTER DEFENCE ASSOCIATION DISSOCIATED SELF FROM STATEMENT, WHICH IT CHARACTERIZED AS REHASH OF STATEMENTS PREVIOUSLY MADE BY PROVISIONAL IRA. UDA STATEMENT POINTED OUT THAT ENEMY OF ULSTER PROTESTANT AND PROTESTANT FAITH IS IRA PROVOS "AIDED COVERTLY BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY." WHILE VIOLENCE CONTINUES, UDA WOULD CONTINUE TO DEFEND PROTESTANT PEOPLE AND FAITH AGAINST ALL ENEMIES REGARDLESS OF

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OF RELIGION.

E. ALLIANCE PARTY CHAIRMAN JIM HENDRON FOUND IT HARD TO ACCEPT THAT UVF REALLY WANTS TRUE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS. UVF STATEMENT INDICATES REJECTION OF OLD-STYLE UNIONISM, BUT DOESN'T RECOGNIZE THAT THREE EXECUTIVE COALITION PARTIES ARE ALREADY GETTING TOGETHER AS ULSTERMEN TO SINK OLD DIVISIONS AND ACCEPT REALITIES. "IF WORKING-CLASS PROTESTANTS SWALLOW THE PROPAGANDA ABOUT WRECKING THE SYSTEM WITHOUT GIVING IT A CHANCE TO WORK, THEY ARE

ALLOWING THEMSELVES TO BE EXPLOITED BY
EXACTLY THE SAME 50-YEAR OLD METHOD THAT THE UVF HAVE
NOW BELATEDLY RECOGNIZED."

2. COMMENTS:

A. ANALYSIS OF ANY STATEMENT PURPORTEDLY RELEASED BY
PROTESTANT PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION MUST BE UNDERTAKEN
WITH CARE. MYSTERY SURROUNDING THESE ORGANIZATIONS,
THEIR OVERLAPPING AND SHIFTING MEMBERSHIPS AND
AVERSION AND CONTEMPT OF MANY OF THEIR MEMBERS FOR
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POLITICS IN ANY FORM MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO SAY IN MANY
CASES WHETHER A STATEMENT HAS IN FACT BEEN ISSUED ON
BEHALF OF ORGANIZATION WHICH IS SAID TO HAVE RELEASED
IT, OR WHETHER STATEMENT DOES REFLECT VIEWS OF ITS
MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY IN WHICH THEY LIVE.

B. UVF STATEMENT DOES, HOWEVER, RING TRUE IN MANY
RESPECTS. PAST FEW YEARS HAVE SEEN CONSIDERABLE
PROTESTANT WORKING-CLASS DISILLUSIONMENT WITH
UNIONIST HIERARCHY, BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND EVEN THE
UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN; RISE OF CLASS-CONSCIOUSNESS
SIMILAR TO THAT IN URBAN IRISH REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT IN
EARLY 60S; AND WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT NORTHERN CATHOLICS
AS ULSTERMEN IF CATHOLICS PUT ULSTER AHEAD OF THEIR
TRADITIONAL IRISH REPUBLICAN ASPIRATIONS.

C. COMING FROM HARDEST OF ULSTER'S PROTESTANT "HARD
MEN", STATEMENT'S CONCILIATORY TONE TOWARD ULSTER
CATHOLICS, AND UVF'S RECENT CALL FOR END TO SECTARIAN
ASSASSINATIONS, ARE NEW ELEMENT IN NI POLITICAL SCENE.
BUT POSITIONS TAKEN BY ULSTER FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND
ULSTER DEFENCE ASSOCIATION INDICATE THERE ARE STILL
IMPORTANT PROTESTANT PARAMILITARY ELEMENTS PREPARED TO
CONTINUE THE FIGHT ALONG TRADITIONAL LINES.

D. UVF'S APPARENT DETENTE WITH PROVISIONALS, ON BASIS
OF DE-ESCALATION OF INTER-COMMUNITY VIOLENCE, AND WITH
OFFICIALS, ON BASIS OF WORKING-CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS,
IS MOTIVATED ON BOTH SIDES PRIMARILY BY DESIRE TO BRING
DOWN SUNNINGDALE STRUCTURE (AND NOT, AS BRITISH MAY
HOPE, TO FORM "NORMAL" WORKING-CLASS OPPOSITION TO
COALITION EXECUTIVE.). THUS IT COULD WELL LEAD NOT TO
REDUCTION IN VIOLENCE, BUT ITS RE-TARGETING AGAINST
BRITISH AND PRO-SUNNINGDALE ELEMENTS. IN LONGER TERM,
WHILE ONE CANNOT INTELLECTUALLY RULE OUT POSSIBILITY
OF AGREEMENT ON AMALGAMATED - IRELAND - TYPE SOLUTION
(A LA BOAL), UVF AND REPUBLICANS STILL HAVE TRADITIONAL
FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE OVER WHICH SECTION OF PEOPLE --
NORTHERN IRELAND, OR ALL-IRELAND -- HAVE RIGHT TO
DETERMINE ITS POLITICAL FUTURE. CERTAINLY THRUST OF
UVF'S STATEMENT, WHILE NOT RULING OUT "AMALGAMATED

IRELAND," IS TOWARD SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ULSTER
WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM UK OR IRELAND.
E. ALTHOUGH UVF CRITICIZES LOYALIST LEADERS FOR
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LACKING PLAN, ITS OWN PROPOSAL FOR "COUNCIL OF ULSTER"
DEBATE ON FUTURE OF PROVINCE IS QUITE SIMILAR TO
LOYALIST DEMAND THAT EXECUTIVE BE BROUGHT DOWN AND
THAT NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY THEN ACT AS CONFERENCE
AT WHICH FUTURE OF NORTHERN IRELAND WILL BE DEBATED.
DIFFERENCE IS THAT UVF AND OTHER PARAMILITARY
ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT DIRECTLY REPRESENTED IN ASSEMBLY.
WHETHER "COUNCIL OF ULSTER" WOULD BE HELD UNDER OFFICIAL
BRITISH AUSPICES IS AN IMPORTANT POINT NOT TOUCHED ON IN
UVF STATEMENT.

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